

**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA  
FIRE & POLICE COMMISSION MINUTES**

\*\*\*\*\*  
Thursday **September 23, 2010** @ 4:00

Santa Barbara Fire Department  
EOC/Classroom  
121 W. Carrillo

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**REGULAR MEETING**

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:**

Present: Commissioners: Lennon, Parker, Christensen and Signor (Arrived at 4:17 PM) (Rodriguez excused absence)

Staff Present: Captain Alex Altavilla, Police Technician Holly Perea, Sgt. Riley Harwood, Fire Chief Andy DiMizio, Councilmember Bendy White (Arrived at 4:17 PM) and Acting Secretary, Carol Lupo

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**MOTION:** Lennon to approve minutes of **August 26, 2010**

**VOTE:** Unanimous voice vote: Motion passed

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Any member of the public may address the Fire & Police Commission for up to one minute on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Commission that is not scheduled for a public hearing before the Commission. The total time for this item is 10 minutes. If you wish to address the Commission under this item, please complete and deliver to the Commission Secretary before the meeting is convened, a "Request to Speak" form, including a description of the subject you wish to address.

None

**4. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

None.

**5. OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

**6. NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**7. Limited Dance Permit for the Blue Agave Restaurant**

Police Technician Perea read the request aloud. No public input.

## 8. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief DiMizio stated there was not much alarm activity last month, which allowed the department to move ahead on other business.

A request was submitted to California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) to be an Engine Assignee. A series of engines are assigned throughout the state. Cal EMA provides the engine and the department provides the support and responds to fires throughout the state via the mutual aid system. This will allow for more involvement and to gain experience, and provides another reserve apparatus to the department.

A funder is working to get a grant for a Type 3 Wildland Engine. The funder will have more information in October about the grant status. The chance of receiving the grant is about 50%.

Emergency Medical Service (EMS) enhancement has been a priority for the Fire Chief since this is about 75% of the incident calls. Some of the goals are:

- Obtain a Medical Director.
- Upgrade hardware, including external defibrillators. Current defibrillators are outdated and need replacement.
- Create a county-wide EMS group to look at how EMS is provided throughout the County. We work closely with the County EMS Agency to enhance our emergency medical response.

Enhance Haz Mat response –A hazardous materials unit is staffed at Station 2. Due to mostly financial reasons, adequate staffing has not been provided to send this out with the 6 people needed. Working with Chiefs from Montecito, Carpinteria and Santa Barbara County Fire Departments to upgrade and provide support for the hazardous materials response. The goal is to provide enough staffing and equipment to support a north and a south county haz mat team. Our department would provide the bulk of the south county team.

Red flag policies - There have been changes from the National Weather Service in regards to the Red Flag criteria. There is potential for Red Flag weather in the next couple of days. Reviewing our policies and procedures. The department works closely with the PD in regards to evacuations and traffic control points. Also work closely with Parks, Public works and community leaders.

818 Bath St. Structure fire - Exterior of building only; caused a lot of smoke but not a significant event.

Handouts with last month stats:

- 3:50 response time average (note an 11:00 minute response anomaly, most likely a data entry error, which will be reviewed.)
- Incident Type Report Summary for the month of August – Once again shows 72% of calls are rescue and emergency medical in nature.
- Incident count by Station up to September 21. Station 1 is the busiest station.

(Commissioner Signor and Councilmember White arrive at 4:17 PM)

## 9. POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT

- Patrol had a successful shift change on Sept. 4 which will take them thru mid January
- City Council on Tuesday adopted an OTS Grant for \$131,000 for DUI checkpoints and saturation patrols
- Last month Patrol Division had 3465 of calls for service
- An example of the proactive work done by Patrol looking for criminal activity. Officer Cruz looking at cars parked at hotels ran an out of state plate. Investigative follow up on the registered owner found he had a \$50,000 bail warrant for narcotics out of Los Angeles. Arrests followed.
- Criminal Impact Team – Last week alone had 9 felony arrests. The team works closely with the burglary and narcotics Sergeants.
- Investigative Division is busy with the following upcoming court cases:
  - Lyons double homicide on the Mesa
  - Musser homicide
  - Carver carjacking case in La Cumbre Plaza.

Administration Services Division - Open entry testing October 1 at Cabrillo Arts Center, consisting of written exams. Once passed candidates proceed to oral boards. At least 9 officers will be hired from 3 different streams of candidates: entry level, academy graduates, and lateral lists. An academy will start in November in Ventura County and another will take place in January in San Bernardino County.

Currently there are 5 new officers who have graduated from San Bernardino and will be out on their own hopefully by the end of December. Other backgrounds in process for 2 parking enforcement officers, 1 records clerk, and 4 dispatchers.

Sergeant orals were completed this week. Appears two sergeant positions will need to be filled by the end of the year. Next step is Chief's interview followed by selections.

Commissioner Parker asked for the current projections for retirements. Captain Altavilla stated they have authority from Council to over hire. Historically on average 5 – 7 officers leave each year. The department tries to stay ahead of the curve when hiring, and that is the reason for doing the 3 candidate streams. Hiring entry level has always been successful. It is about a year process. Laterals are able to get out in the field quicker.

Commissioner Parker asked if lateral officers are hired at entry level or do they receive credit for service. Captain Altavilla replied that he was not sure of the step they start at and it probably depends what they bring to the table. The laterals bring their retirement with them. Sick and CTO time starts at the entry level. New employees under a different retirement system would assume the city retirement system.

Commission Parker asked if there was a lot of lateral interest. Captain Altavilla replied he was not sure what the number is. Economically we do have large number of applications from the different streams.

## Fire Hiring

Chief DiMizio added that they currently have an open lateral recruitment which closes Sept. 30. There are about 10 openings and they also have approval to over hire up to 12 based on the number of retirements by the end of the year. There is also an internal City employee promotional firefighter recruitment that would allow qualified current city employees to apply.

Promotions are anticipated to take place in next 6 months or so for the positions of:

- Operations Division Chief
- Battalion Chief
- Captain
- Engineer

Commission Parker asked if the fire service is similar to law enforcement in that if you don't get picked up within 3 years, as far as POST is concerned, you have to be recertified. Chief DiMizio answered that fire is about 5 years behind law enforcement as far as qualifications, but are standardized nationwide. Applications are being received from as far away as Colorado and Battalion Chiefs are applying. The challenge is to review the applications and check qualifications.

Commissioner Parker noted to Captain Altavilla that the response to the requests were received but he has not had time to read them completely yet, and anticipates he may have questions at the next meeting, and to relay that to the Police Chief and Deputy Chief.

Commissioner Christensen asked Chief DiMizio if Fire has an idea of the number of retirements. Chief DiMizio responded that Fire has received 6 retirement notices, and anticipates 4 more by end of the year and approval to over hire by 2. Firefighters are trained in-house. Training time of laterals is shortened from 8 weeks to 12 weeks, with probationary requirements through the first year. There has been good success with laterals in the past, especially candidates from close by and US Forest Service employees who have ties to the community.

Commissioner Christensen mentioned to Captain Altavilla that she saw in the paper today that PD had received 10 additional notices of intention to retire. Captain Altavilla replied he had not read the paper and stated he has not seen any paperwork.

Commissioner Christensen asked how many retirements he was aware of. Captain Altavilla stated there have just been discussions, and no formal submittals.

Commissioner Christensen asked if during the last recruitment if there were 1400 applications for something like 5 filled posts. Captain Altavilla was not sure of the numbers this time but there will be a large number of submittals. Background checks reveal those that don't qualify.

Commissioner Christensen asked if financial information is part of background checks. Captain Altavilla answered that it always has been. It speaks to character, dependability, and trust.

Commissioner Christensen asked if the economy has impacted the ability to hire, or if foreclosures from other type of problems are filtered out. Captain Altavilla answered it certainly can, and they filter out overspending versus a catastrophic medical issue or a foreclosure. Not all circumstances are painted the same.

Commissioner Parker commented that he has information that the Police Chief will not be attending more than 1-2 meetings a year and will be rotating attendance amongst his staff instead. Captain

Altavilla replied this is similar to the Fire Chief who would like to provide Command staff with experience and allow the commission to get to know other staff.

Commissioner Parker mentioned on some issues before the Commission the Police Chief's individual input could be very important and hopes he will attend more then twice a year.

**10. ADJORN: 4:37 PM**